

Ezra 10:1-44, The Gift of Repentance

The Situation from Ezra 9:

- Mixed marriage...it was a religious problem, **not** racial.
- Mal. 2, many of these forbidden marriages were a result of social advancement; men abandoning their Jewish wives for unbelieving Gentile daughters of wealthy land owners.
- PERHAPS this is **not** a call for divorce but a separation of illicit unions:
 - “Divorce” – **not** used, but a term describing those living in sin –common law?
 - “Foreign women” – **same** term for adulteress in Pr. 2:16, “[D]elivered from the forbidden woman, from the **adulteress** w/ her smooth words.”

Outline:

- Shecaniah’s Proposal (vss. 1-4)
- Assembling of the people (vss. 5-8)
- Cooperation of the People (vss. 9-15)
- Completion of the Repentance (vss. 16-44)

General guidelines about confession:

1. Confession is **not** the same as repentance. Confession is ‘**agreeing**’ w/ God about our sin (1 Jn. 1:9). Repentance is a **change of mind that RESULTS** in a change of action.
2. Confession should be made to God & to one another (James 5:16).
3. Confession should be specific *and* thorough.
4. **Public confession**: required of public sins or *public manifestations of private sins**

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| 10:1 | 1) Genuine repentance includes heartfelt sorrow for your sin before a holy God. |
| 10:2 | 2) Genuine repentance sees the sin as ultimately against God . |
| | 3) Genuine repentance refuses to blame others for your sin. |
| | 4) Genuine repentance hopes in God. |
| 10:3-4 | 5) Genuine repentance bears fruit in keeping with repentance. |

Mal. 2, “Gd hates divorce.” Is this plan of Shecaniah approved by Gd? 4 Points to Consider:

1. Divorce permitted in the OT (different reasons). Dt. 24:1, “[S]he finds no favor in his eyes b/c he has found some indecency in her...” Could **NOT** refer to adultery (death penalty).
2. Ruth?? NO indication these wives were foreigners who followed the Lord & married godly Israelites. **This** situation were men who lusted after foreign pagan women & married them.
3. Children sent away? Much like today in ancient culture: moms stay w/ the kids (Ishmael).
4. Ezra’s lack of discernment? Commentators disagree. Nehemiah does **not** condemn Ezra, godly elders agree with Ezra...**This action is the lesser of 2 evils.**

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| 10:7-9 | 6) Genuine repentance submits to the Lord’s discipline. |
| 10:12-15 | 7) Genuine repentance fears the Lord, not man. |
| 10:25-44 | 8) Genuine repentance is not perfectionism, but a continuous way of life! |
| | 9) Genuine repentance is a gift of God. |